

Louisiana Blackjacks building a better Kandahar

Story and photo by Spc. C. Elijah Spencer
211th Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

Kandahar, Afghanistan --

The pounding sound of hammers is everywhere. The screeching whine of skill saws, and the constant yelling of measurements, dimensions, and angles that sound Greek is enough to make the average person go crazy. However, this seeming chaos of sound and measurements is music to the ears of the soldiers of Bravo Co. 205th Engineer Battalion of the Louisiana Army National Guard, better known as the "Blackjacks".

The Blackjacks have been working diligently around Kandahar to make improvements for the lifestyles of the soldiers living here and when they work, they work to the fullest.

"Our work is our pride and we stand behind it," said Sgt. 1st Class Troy M. Archote, from Franklinton, La.

The Blackjacks have been in Kandahar for only one month, but in those thirty days they have managed to make their presence known, as well



Staff Sgt. Kevin Bono cuts a beam to support a wall for the new office area in the TLS building as seen, by all. Their projects range from laying a concrete slab for a new gym, building a new Military Police Tactical Operations Center to putting in a pseudo parking lot for the PFC Jerrod Dennis Combat Hospital. The Blackjack comes to Afghanistan with a

full house of soldiers that are able to handle plumbing, electrical work, carpentry and masonry work. They form a unit that runs like a well-oiled machine that can do anything and everything that is needed to get the job done.

— See **Blackjacks** pg.8



A member of the civil affairs team keeps a vigilant watch and his weapon at the ready as the convoy proceeds through Kandahar City.

On the road with Civil Affairs

Story and photo by Spc. Zia Ul Haq
211th Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

Kandahar, Afghanistan --

As Civil Affairs (CA) travels through towns and villages throughout the Kandahar area, they leave behind progress for a better Afghanistan. Dealing with the local people is CA's job and they do it well. It is the responsibility of Coalition Joint Civil Military Operation Task Force (CJCMOTF), the 321st CA Brigade from San Antonio, TX, to be the facilitator between the military and the local government. Their entire focus is to improve the life of Afghans by providing schools, food, water and medicine and

more importantly, to educate the locals to provide for themselves.

As six members of this team gear up to go meet with the Governor of Kandahar Province and coordinate relief efforts for the people of the region, there is a lot on their minds.

"Security [of the team], the route, and battle drills are going through my head," said Spc. Clinton T. Newman, CA operator from San Antonio, TX.

There are many variables that go into effect as they move through the city.

"There are too many concerns and security is number one on our list," added Newman.

Each vehicle is equipped with a

— See **Civil** pg. 10

From the Top

Thibeault Re-Ups in Kandahar



On 23 September 2003, at 0830z time, Col. Garrett, 1st BDE Combat Team Commander re-enlists Spc Victor Thibeault for another three years. Spc Thibeault just returned to Kandahar Airfield from a two month rotation to Shkin FB in Paktika Province Afghanistan. Spc Thibeault and a few other soldiers afterwards had an opportunity to board the AH-64 Apache Helicopter and check out some of the advanced weaponry and computerized systems.

Congratulations Spc. Thibeault...



Mountain Warrior Weekly falls under the supervision of The Combined Joint Task Force 180 and is published weekly on Mondays.

Coalition Task Force

Warrior Commander:

Col. William B. Garrett III

Coalition Task Force Warrior

Command Sgt. Maj.

Command Sgt. Maj. Frank A. Grippe

10th Mountain Brigade PAO:

Capt. Kevin K. Dasher

Mountain Warrior Weekly, a U.S.

Army newsletter, is produced by

the 211th Mobile Public Affairs

Detachment, U.S. Army Reserve at

Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan.

Commander:

Capt. Kevin K. Dasher

NCOIC:

Staff Sgt. Dave S. Thompson

Editor/Layout/Graphics:

Spc. C. Elijah Spencer

Journalist / Photojournalist:

Spc. Zia Ul Haq, Spc. Timothy S. Melzow

In accordance with AR 360-1, this newsletter is an authorized unofficial publication for members of the U.S. military. The contents of *Mountain Warrior Weekly* are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. government, DOD or Dept. of the Army. (all submissions are subject to editing for size)

Word from the Warriors

What did you think about Lee Greenwood's performance?



"Fantastic"
-Spc. Evan M. Knight
-205th Engineers
-Bogalusa, La



"I loved it"
-Sgt. Domenic D'Ambra
-A Co. 2-22
-Providence, RI



"It focused a lot on the troops"
-Spc. Shane A. Guyllette
-205th Engineers
-Amite, La



"It was nice what he did for SSgt. Foster's birthday"
-Sgt. Michael A. Moore
-205th Engineers
-Fluker, La

3-6 Field Artillery reign fire at OrgunE and Shkin bases

Story by Spc. Timothy S. Melzow and
photos by Spc. C. Elijah Spencer
211th Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

Being a hero isn't about an extraordinary man doing normal things. It's about a normal man doing something extraordinary.

On Kandahar Air Field the 3-6th Field Artillery is the king of the battlefield. The 3-6th Field Artillery Battalion of the 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, is the only artillery battalion in Afghanistan. On Kandahar Air Field and on 11 outlying firebases around Afghanistan's southern region, the artillerymen's guns light up the night sky and shatters the silence.

A massive wall looms over the compound, and dirt filled Hesco containers help fortify the perimeter. Razor sharp concertina wires adorn the walls and serves as a lethal warning to unauthorized visitors. This is the Shkin firebase compound. At a 5,000-foot elevation, this firebase offers a view of the town, sur-



Spc. Noel verifies that the coordinates are correct before firing.



Soldiers of the 3-6 Field Artillery fire off a round during live fire exercises at Orgun E

rounding orchards, and a bird's eye view of the border checkpoint to Pakistan.

Upon arriving at Shkin, the 3-6th Field Artillery immediately had their hands full. They hadn't been there an hour when the mounted presence patrol that consisted of forward observers and the infantry had a call for fire. A call for fire is when the forward observer calls back to the fire direction center and gives them the location and type of artillery rounds needed to neutralize the enemy.

While in Afghanistan, the 3-6th provides fire support for the infantry. They fire illumination, smoke, and high explosive rounds. The artillerymen are working to uproot the enemy that hides on the Pakistani border and in the low lying region surrounding the firebase.

Working hand in hand with the Afghan National Army, US forces are teaching them how to conduct patrols in an effort to police their country. In the future when the US and Coalition forces leave Afghanistan, these soldiers will be left to support the Afghan government.

The troop's morale at firebases can help or hinder any mission.

"The morale is high, everyone is in good spirits. Everyone enjoys doing their job and making a difference and doing something for their country," said Sgt. Jeffery Jackson, second section chief of A-Battery, 3-6th Field Artillery, from Watertown, N.Y.

Chaplains make regular visits to the firebases to ensure the troops are in good spirits. Capt. John Stertzbach, the Chaplain of 3-6th Field Artillery from Williston, VT. visits the firebases about once a month and does what he calls a presence ministry. Soldiers can come to him with their concerns, family problems, or to seek spiritual advice, and questions about faith.

"Well anytime you're in a combat zone morale will vary, but these guys are highly motivated and highly trained, and I am proud of my guys. They're in primitive conditions and they're ready to do the job," said Chaplain Stertzbach.

Chaplain Stertzbach stresses the importance of having a positive attitude out in the combat zone. Being in a combat zone is a learning experience for someone who has never been there. Some artillerymen feel that being out here in combat is what this war on terrorism is all about.

"I'm in combat for a good reason, and I'm prepared to give my life if that is what it takes," said Pfc Ryan Gifford, 3-6th Field Artillery, Second Section, A-Battery member, from Irving, TX.

WORLD NEWS

U.S. Transfers Border Patrol to Iraqis

By PATRICK QUINN

Associated Press Writer

MUNTHERRIABORDER CROSSING, Iraq (AP) — The U.S. Army for the first time Saturday gave Iraq's provisional government responsibility for patrolling a stretch of the country's borders - a sensitive, 210-mile region of forbidding desert frontier between Iraq and Iran.

The transfer was significant because it comes as the U.S.-led coalition faces pressure to give Iraqis more control over their affairs. And security here is crucial: The border is a popular crossing point for illegal Iranian pilgrims en route to Shiite holy sites, raising fears that al-Qaida or other terrorists could sneak through in disguise.

Calling it an "important day for the Iraqi people," Col. Michael Moody, commander of the 4th Infantry's 4th Brigade, formally handed patrol duties in area to Iraqi Col. Nazim Shareef Mohammed.

Part of an American drive to ease the burden on thinly stretched U.S. soldiers, the switch marked the first time since the fall of Saddam Hussein that Iraqis have been given policing authority over an entire border region. The American occupation forces now have only an advisory role.

"This is a great example of new Iraqi security forces taking control," Moody said. "Each day the border becomes more secure. This is good news for the Iraqi people and the coalition."

The frontier includes a craggy, mountainous region - some of the most treacherous terrain in Iraq - and temperatures often surpass 122 degrees. It runs from the edges of Kurdish-controlled territory in northern Iraq to a point just southeast of Baghdad, encompassing nearly all of Diyalia province, one of three under 4th Infantry control.

"If this experiment is successful in Diyalia province, then it is an example for all of Iraq," declared Lt. Col. Reggie Allen, commanding officer of the 4th Infantry Division's 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry, standing just near the border.

Mohammed's 1,178-strong force is made up of Arabs, Kurds and Turks. "We are unique," said Mohammed, a Kurd. "This is an important day for us because we officially take over this highly sensitive border."

U.S. soldiers started training the Iraqi border forces in May, in sessions that touched on human rights of detainees as well as searches for Islamic militants or suicide bombers of the Iraqi resistance, trying to blend in with pilgrims.

With no diplomatic relations between Iran and Iraq, many Iranians try to cross at a point about 75 miles east of Baghdad on their way to Najaf and Karbala - the most sacred cities for Shiites after Mecca and Medina.

Allen said his 4th Infantry forces, equipped with armored vehicles and scout helicopters, have stopped more than 14,000 illegal pilgrims since the end of August.

The pilgrims often trek for two or three days through the wasteland to reach a highway just inside Iraq, hoping to hook up with smugglers who charge up to \$30 to drive them south to the two cities. They are often robbed by the people offering to drive them.

"The word is out in Iran that Iraq is free," Allen said. "For years, Saddam Hussein did not allow them into the country. Now,

they mass themselves in groups sometimes as large as 1,000 and cross. Some die of dehydration as they cross."

When border forces catch them, the Iraqis are held in a collection facility, screened and returned home.

Lt. Col. Vince Price, who runs part of the border with Allen, said border guards recently stopped two Afghans with Taliban identification cards. The Afghans were released, but Price said it was a sign of the close cooperation between the Iraqi border police and U.S. Army

U.S. Troops Attacked in Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Suspected Taliban fighters attacked a U.S. military patrol in eastern Afghanistan, but there were no reports of casualties or damage, the military said Saturday.

The attack occurred Friday near a U.S. base at Gardez, in eastern Paktia province near the border with Pakistan, the military said in a statement from Bagram air base. Bagram is the headquarters for the U.S.-led coalition.

The soldiers returned fire and the attackers retreated.

Also Saturday, Afghan police defused two anti-personnel mines planted just yards away from Kabul's Blue Mosque, the capital's police chief Gen. Baba Jan said.

He accused Taliban insurgents of planting both bombs. Police immediately sealed off and searched the area, but no arrests were made, Jan said.

On Friday, coalition forces found three unexploded rockets in the Gardez area and destroyed them, the military said. The military was investigating whether an explosion occurred in the area.

Rocket attacks against U.S. targets are common, especially in the south and east of the country where Taliban insurgents have stepped up violence. Most rockets miss their targets and many use crude timing devices.



SPORTS

Black Tennis Pioneer Althea Gibson Dies

By DEEPTI HAJELA
Associated Press Writer

Althea Gibson, a sports pioneer who broke the color barrier in tennis in the 1950s as the first black to win Wimbledon and the U.S. national title, died Sunday. She was 76.

Gibson, seriously ill for several years, died of respiratory failure at a hospital in East Orange, N.J., after spending two days in the intensive care ward, said Fran Gray, a longtime friend who co-founded the Althea Gibson Foundation.

"Her contribution to the civil rights movement was done with her tennis racket," Gray said.

Gibson was the first black to compete in the U.S. championships, in 1950, and at Wimbledon, in 1951. She won both Wimbledon and the U.S. championships in 1957 and 1958, the French Open in 1956, and three doubles titles at Wimbledon (1956-58).

"Who could have imagined? Who could have thought?" Gibson said in 1988 as she presented her Wimbledon trophies to the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History.

"Here stands before you a Negro woman, raised in Harlem, who went on to become a tennis player ... and finally wind up being a world champion, in fact, the first black woman champion of this world," she said.

The eldest of five children, Gibson was a self-described "born athlete" who broke racial barriers, not only in tennis but also in pro golf.

No other black woman won the U.S. national tennis title until Serena Williams in 1999 or won Wimbledon until Venus Williams in 2000.

When Venus won her first Wimbledon title, she reflected on Gibson's achievements.

"It had to be hard because people were unable to see past color," Williams said. "Still, these days it's hardly any different because you have to realize it has only been 40 years. How can you change years and centuries of being biased in 40 years? So realistically, not too much has changed."

Gibson was born Aug. 25, 1927, in Silver, S.C., and lived in East Orange for most of the last 30 years. Her foundation, based in Newark, was created to help urban youth develop their skills in tennis and golf.

Gibson picked up tennis while growing up in New York, slapping rubber balls off a brick wall. She then met Fred Johnson, a one-armed tennis coach who taught her to play.

Gibson won her first tournament at 15, becoming the New York State black girls' singles tennis champion. Boxer Sugar Ray Robinson helped pay for her travels.

She spent her high school years in Wilmington,

N.C., where Dr. R.W. Johnson took her into his family's home and let her play on his grass court. Dr. E.A. Eaton coached her there, and Gibson would later credit him with helping her cultivate the grace and dignity she needed on and off the court.

"No one would say anything to me because of the way I carried myself," Gibson said. "Tennis was a game for ladies and gentlemen, and I conducted myself in that manner."

She attended Florida A&M on a tennis and basketball scholarship, and then began her ascent in the American Tennis Association, founded in 1916 for black players.

In 1950, she was the first black to play in the National Grass Court Tennis Championships, the precursor of today's U.S. Open, coming within a point of beating Wimbledon champion Louise Brough.

She broke the racial barrier at Wimbledon the following year, but disappointment at losing nearly caused her to give up the game for the Army in 1955. She applied for a commission, but Gibson's coach talked her out of it.

A year later, she blossomed during a nine-month tour sponsored by the U.S. State Department, winning 14 tournaments and reaching the finals of the other three she entered. She also captured her first women's doubles championship at Wimbledon.

Although beaten at Wimbledon in the singles and losing in the final round at the U.S. championship in New York, she was on top of her game and in 1957 began a two-year run as champion of the top two tournaments in tennis.

"She was a great champion and great person. We had a good relationship - she was always there for me even when I was a nobody," Martina Navratilova said Sunday in Leipzig, Germany, where she won her 172nd career doubles title.

"Her life was very difficult, but she broke down a lot of barriers and doors and made it easier for a lot of us."

Gibson was The Associated Press' Female Athlete of the Year in 1957 and 1958. Following her 1957 Wimbledon victory, she was given a ticker-tape parade in New York City and an official welcome at City Hall.

More than 30 years passed before another black woman, Zina Garrison, reached the final at Wimbledon (1990). It was another 10 years before Venus Williams triumphed at the All England Club.

Gibson retired from the game soon after her 1958 Wimbledon and U.S. titles because there was no prize money and few lucrative endorsements. It wasn't until 1968, the start of the Open era, that the major tournaments paid pro players - the U.S. Open now offers \$1 million to the singles champions.

"If she had been a half-step later (in her tennis



career), she would have been a multimillionaire," said friend and former New York Mayor David Dinkins.

Gibson briefly tried singing, then signed a \$100,000 deal to play in exhibition tennis matches before Harlem Globetrotters' games in 1959.

She took up golf in 1960 and became the first black woman on the LPGA Tour two years later, but she never won a tournament and earned little money.

Recently, Gibson, Gray and others had collaborated on a book, "Born to Win: The Althea Gibson Story," to be published next year.

Gibson was inducted into numerous halls of fame, including the International Tennis Hall of Fame. In 1975, she became state commissioner of athletics in New Jersey, a job she held for 10 years. She then served on the state athletics control board until 1988, and the governor's council on physical fitness until 1992.

Her layoff from the council marked a turn in Gibson's fortunes. In recent years, the former champion became ill and suffered two cerebral aneurysms and a stroke.

Her finances also declined, and Gibson isolated herself as she struggled on Social Security, not wanting anyone to see her condition.

When news of her situation spread in 1996, admirers around the country held fund-raisers and benefits to ease Gibson's financial burdens. Letters with cash and checks also began to pour in, including one with two \$100 bills from Mariaan de Swardt, a ranked South African tennis player.

"I focused on your game when I learned how to play, and I wanted to thank you," the note read.

Gibson was married twice; husbands William Darben and Sidney Llewellyn are deceased. Gibson didn't have children, Gray said.

WEEKLY COMICS



NFL WEEK 4 SCORES

Final	1	2	3	4	T
<u>Tennessee</u> (3-	0	16	7	7	30

Pittsburgh (2- 3 10 0 0 13
2-0)

Final OT	1	2	3	4	OT	T
<u>San</u>						
<u>Diego</u>	(0-4-	7	14	3	7	0 31
0)						

Oakland (2-7 7 0 17 3 34
2-0) α

Final	1	2	3	4	T
Dallas (2-1-0)	0	14	0	3	17

NY Jets (0-4-0) 3 0 3 0 6

Final	1	2	3	4	T
Atlanta (1-	0	0	0	3	3

[Carolina](#) (3-0-0) « 7 10 0 6 23

Final	1	2	3	4	T
<u>San</u>	1	2	3	4	T

Minnesota (4-

Final	1	2	3	4	T
<u>Kansas</u>					
<u>City</u> (4-0-	0	3	7	7	17
0) «					

Baltimore (2-0 0 0 3 7 10 2-0)

Final	1	2	3	4	T
<u>Detroit</u> (1-	7	3	0	6	16

Denver (4-0) 7 7 3 3 20

Final	1	2	3	4	T
<u>Indianapolis</u> (4-	14	10	24	7	55

New
Orleans (1-3- 0 10 3 821

Final	1	2	3	4	T
<u>Cincinnati</u> (1-3-0) @	7	7	7	0	21
<u>Cleveland</u> (1-2-0)	7	7	0	0	14

Final	1	2	3	4	T
-------	---	---	---	---	---

England (2-2- 3 0 7 7 17
0)

Washington (3-1-0) @ 3 3 14 0 20

Final	1	2	3	4	T
<u>Jacksonville</u> (0-	3	7	10	0	20

Houston (2-2- 7 7 3 7 24
0) α

Final	1	2	3	4	T
<u>Philadelphia</u> (1-2-0) @	10	3	3	7	23
<u>Buffalo</u> (2-2-0)	0	0	0	13	13

Final	1	2	3	4	T
-------	---	---	---	---	---

<u>Arizona</u> (1-	0	7	6	0	13
3-0)					
<u>St. Louis</u> (2-	14	6	3	14	37
2-0)					

2-0) *

★★★★★

Courtesy of.



HEADLINERS

Man Sues After Being Locked in Toilet

NORFOLK, Va. (AP) — A sudden, irresistible urge. A portable toilet. A confrontation with an angry construction worker. Now, a federal lawsuit.

William Tremmel, 68, of Altoona, Pa., needed to go. Badly. So he dashed to the nearest portable toilet on the Virginia Beach boardwalk.

Problem was, it belonged to construction workers for Weeks Marine, a company hired by the city to replenish the beach. And those workers were fed up with outsiders using the company can.

They retaliated, Tremmel claims in a lawsuit filed last month, by driving a bulldozer or front-end loader to the toilet and blocking the doorway, pinning him "inside the rank tomb."

Tremmel is seeking \$100,000 for the Aug. 19, 2001, incident.

Weeks doesn't deny its employee blocked Tremmel in the

toilet but says the worker was within his rights.

Tremmel says he was locked inside for 25 minutes. He claims members of his family shouted at the worker, but the man left and returned with his foreman, who chastised Tremmel through the closed door and accused him of trespassing.

Tremmel says the "abduction and false imprisonment" caused him "humiliation, mortification, shame, vilification, injury to his feelings, mental suffering, insult and indignity." Tremmel and his wife were celebrating their anniversary.

The lawsuit also says Tremmel has emphysema, was recovering from prostate surgery and had undergone double-bypass heart surgery.

Weeks Marine denied that the workers chastised Tremmel or that he was locked in the toilet for almost half an hour. Weeks says in court papers that its workers believed blocking Tremmel's exit was "reasonable" because he was "wrongfully using the port-o-let."

No hearing date has been set.

Man Steals ID of Sex Offender

CLINTON, Conn. (AP) — A good rule of thumb for an identity thief is not to steal the name of someone whose reputation is worse than yours, such as a sex offender.

Police said James Perry stole the name and identity of a neighbor who turned out to be a convicted sex offender.

Perry stole the identity of Robert Kowalski in order to obtain a driver's license, police said. Perry was living in Florida at the time and Kowalski was his neighbor.

Perry had four drunken driving arrests which he believed would make it difficult to get a license legally in Connecticut, police said.

Perry moved to Connecticut about a year ago and things went well until Perry was arrested for disorderly conduct.

A routine computer check found that "Kowalski" was a convicted sex offender in Michigan and not registered as required with the state of Connecticut.

Every bit of identification in his possession labeled the suspect as "Kowalski," but man himself was adamant that he was not a convicted sex offender, police said.

Finally, a check of his fingerprints revealed "Kowalski" to be James Perry.

Perry was released from Superior Court in Middletown Thursday on a promise to appear for his next court date Oct. 10 on charges of criminal impersonation, with charges of identity theft and forgery.

Man Says He Got Mouse With Fried Chicken

BALTIMORE (AP) — A patron of a Popeye's restaurant says he bit into a mouse that had been fried along with the chicken.

Tony Hill says he was eating the second piece of his three-piece meal when he made the unappetizing discovery.

He filed a complaint with the health department.

Officials say that same restaurant has been closed twice before for infestation or unsanitary conditions.

Inspectors checked the place yesterday and didn't find any rodents. But officials say they'll be back.

"We're the guys that do all the engineering here on base," said Archote.

The Blackjacks consist of approximately 199 soldiers from the southeastern region of Louisiana. The majority comes from three cities; Bogalusa, Franklinton, and Hammond, La. They have orders to be in Afghanistan for six to twelve months. However, as with most soldiers, the Blackjacks aren't getting their hopes up for exactly when they are going to see Louisiana again.

"We're hoping for six, but expecting twelve," said Archote, "You can't count on assumptions. We're just glad we're here and get to do our part."

"Six months is six months whether you're working or not. Working just makes it all pass by a little faster," said 2nd Lt. Ira R. Fields

This is the first time that the Blackjacks of the 205th have been mobilized since World War II.

"That is an important fact to note, because there have been soldiers that have spent their entire career as a black-jack and the most they have done is practice what they do. We have been given the opportunity to do what we do best in a real life event. We got to practice at home, and now we're actually out in the field and playing the game," said Fields.

Despite the long time period expected here and the rather demanding workload, the soldiers of Bravo Co. keep their spirits high and keep the environment fun as they work day after day.

"I would consider the morale around here amazingly high despite the amount of work that we do here," said Archote. "The guys don't mind working."

"We usually go beyond what is expected of us and we always set the standard," said Spc. Timinirra D. Taylor, from Franklinton, La.

Taylor is one of only five females in Bravo Co. Women seem to be a minority in the engineering career field of the National Guard, but that doesn't seem to affect Spc. Taylor at all.

"Sometimes I feel like an outsider, but by doing my job the best that I can; I become just like one of the fellas," said Taylor.

Taylor has been hanging in there with the rest of the guys of Bravo Co. doing engineer work for six years. The only bit of advice that Taylor has for any other female considering working as an engineer is to not be afraid.

"Don't let being around a big group of men intimidate you. You can work just as good and as hard as they can," said Taylor.

The obvious impression that the Blackjacks have been displaying is that they are glad to be here, they love what they do, and they do it rather well.

"We're ready", said 2nd Lt. David B. Haydel, "Just bring it on."

"The good thing about being here is that you actually get to see what everyone else does and what part they play in the bigger scheme of things," said Lt. Haydel, "It puts all the

pieces of the puzzle together."

The Blackjacks of the 205th work together like a tightly woven quilt, covering anything that comes their way as quickly and precise as they can. Whoever comes across the work of the Blackjacks sees what the standard looks like. Ultimately, the goal for the members of the unit is to do their jobs as best as they can, and for everyone to make it safely home.

"Just be sure to tell our folks back home that their sons and daughters are okay and that they are getting experience that will benefit them for a lifetime. This will definitely make them become even better men and women because of that" said Haydel.



Sgt. Louis Robert shaves down one of the support beams of the new Military Police TOC currently being built

3-6 from pg. 3

"Being out here, doing our job for real it's what we want; our training has paid off. It's a satisfying experience being able to shoot back," said Staff Sgt. Rick Crunk, the Gunnery Sergeant of 3-6th Field Artillery Fire Direction Center, A-Battery from Fort Wayne, IN.

The ability to fire the howitzer at any time is essential for saving lives when in a combat zone. The howitzers of this highly trained unit stand ready to blaze death on those who use terror as their calling cards. At Shkin the artillerymen operate 'round the clock.

"Taking care of the gun, to have it operational at all times, is the number one priority," said Jackson.






Staff Sgt. Tyler Trumble, Chief of section for gun 1, 3-6th Field Artillery C-Battery from Almar, NY. , cautions his soldiers about being aware of their surroundings in combat. Staff Sgt. Trumble checks the round and double checks the location of where the round is headed. He performs these checks to insure that the round is going to where it's intended. He stresses safety checks to his young soldiers in an effort to avoid accidents in the field.





"Avoiding complacency and continuously being aware of your surroundings is what it's all about, because the enemy is out there!" said Staff Sgt. Trumble.

"Your training kicks in and you concentrate on the mission at hand," said Crunk. The artillerymen of the 3-6th Field Artillery prove day in and day out that they are the king of the battlefield.

As the sun sets on Shkin firebase and the artillerymen ready their night vision devices, one thought burns clearer than ever; being in the artillery is a hero's job in itself.

Weekly Weather Forecast

Mon Sep 29		Sunny	79°/54°	0 %
Tue Sep 30		Sunny	81°/48°	0 %
Wed Oct 01		Mostly Sunny	83°/51°	0 %
Thu Oct 02		Sunny	84°/53°	0 %
Fri Oct 03		Sunny	84°/54°	0 %

Sat Oct 04		Sunny	87°/54°	0 %
Sun Oct 05		Sunny	86°/54°	0 %
Mon Oct 06		Sunny	86°/52°	0 %
Tue Oct 07		Sunny	86°/52°	0 %

Courtesy of the weatherchannel.com

"Weekly Quote"

"Go forward until the last round is fired and the last drop of gas is expended...then go forward on foot!"

- General George Patton

Mountain Warrior Weekly is always accepting comments and suggestions as to how we can improve your newspaper. If you have comments or suggestions, or simply just want to be added to our emailing list, email the staff at

Kandaharpresscenter@yahoo.com

Civil from pg.1

global positioning system and a radio communication device.

As the Start Point (SP) approaches, the soldiers put on their Individual Ballistic Vests (IBE) and keep their Kevlar helmets at the ready. Last minute checks are made and vehicles are put through a final preventative maintenance checks and services (PMCS). They go over plans and routes that the convoy will follow. Backup plans are made and the group even goes over an alternate backup plan for the back up plan.

"As battle drills are going through my head, I know that we plan for the worst and hope for the best," said Newman.

After all the final checks have been made, the convoy is prepared for anything. The vehicles depart Kandahar Air Field (KAF) and make their way out of Gate Two towards the Afghan Militia Force (AMF) compound at Gate One. Four AMF soldiers join the group. They are part of the next phase to ultimately transfer Afghanistan's military security, after the US Army and coalition forces have stabilized the region.

To facilitate communication between the governor and the Civil Affairs, the team includes a trusted local who will serve as interpreter and liaison for the operation.

With the AMF positioned in the convoy, the CA soldiers lock and load their weapons. Water is handed out to each individual, to combat the heat that the crew will soon have to deal with.

There is no set regulation or command that says that the mission has to go on as planned, so if the CA team get a bad vibe about the mission, it will be scrubbed, stated Newman.

"We try to be flexible on missions and respond to a situation the best we can," said Newman.

The CA team is now ready to move past Gate One toward the city on highway 4. While the convoy is on the move, every member of the team is alert and scans their portion of the 360 degrees of continually moving perimeter. Communication is constant between all the vehicles, so no one gets separated from the group.

The skills of the drivers are put to the test as the convoy weaves through the unpredictable traffic; past the golden arches, the point of no return, the start of the city. This is where they must press on no matter what.

The CA team must not let anything stop them from advancing to their final destination. With a meeting time set, it is important that the team be on time for their first conference with the new governor. Even slowing down could mean risking the mission and the safety of the team. As the three CA pickup trucks move in and out of traffic it seems almost as if it is a chase scene from a spy movie.

The AMF soldier in the back of the first pick up waves civilian vehicles off the road to make way for the rest of the convoy. As they advance past yet another check point, it is unmistakably clear that they are now in the middle of downtown Kandahar; what was once the capital for Taliban activity. The city now has far less evidence of any Taliban rule.

Now the streets are full of people free of fear. Women are riding around unveiled in cars with the music blaring. CA

and the new Afghan government are on a path to undo years of oppression. The people of Kandahar don't have to look over their shoulders in fear.

As CA moves through the city, all eyes are on the convoy of armed soldiers. Children run along side the convoy with a thumb in the air, saying "how are you doing," in broken English. The Shop owners wave and welcoming the convoy.

"Wherever we go we have all the attention, we are like the circus coming into town," said Sgt. Jesse R. Gibbons, CA operator from Robinsdale, MN.

As the team arrives at the governor's mansion, armed gate guards usher them into the secured compound where they can finally relax and remove some of their protective gear. As two representatives are escorted into the meeting with the governor, the rest of the team takes time to consume a meal ready to eat (MRE).

Inside the meeting, some of the topics discussed include the building of 100 new wells throughout the area and the protection of local leaders that are supportive to the ideals of the interim government. For a first meeting, a lot was accomplished. Not only will the people of Kandahar have 100 new wells, but a rusty old Russian battle tank will be removed from a school yard where many children play.

As the meeting concludes, phone numbers are exchanged and the promise of ongoing cooperation for the improvement of the region is pledged by all.

With the meeting behind them the team must now get back in a defensive frame of mind for the return trip to KAF. They secure their protective gear, check their weapons, and prepare their vehicles for the trip back through the wild, wild, west-like city of Kandahar.

It is now one of the most dangerous parts of the mission, because they have been in the city for about 5 hours and their presence is no longer a secret.

As the team travels through the city they come upon an accident in the road. It is not their job to stop and render aid to these people, but the decision is made to stop and help.

"Helping people is what we do," said Gibbons.

No one is injured in the accident so the CA team moves on. They are now moving at about 55 miles per hour weaving through traffic like NASCAR drivers. They reach a landmark known as the Alamo, the last check point before they reach gate one of KAF. Now the CA team is on the home stretch.

With much relief, the team reaches the gate. This is yet another mission that can go in the books as a success.

The group feels good about what they have accomplished. The US presence is even more accepted now and CA has shown the people of Kandahar that they are here to help rebuild their lives after the oppressive rule of the Taliban.

"It is dangerous, but CA is a very rewarding job. We see what the people need," said Newman.

"It is very [gratifying] to see the joy from the aid we bring to the people," said Gibbons.

Can Bin Ladin Come Out & Play?



21/10/03